DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 290 869 CE 049 520

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TITLE Vocational Expectancies of Low Income Groups: General Trends and Some Considerations for Improvement.
PUB DATE Dec 86
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the International Vocational Education and Training Association Conference (Dallas, TX, December 5-9, 1986).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Awareness; Career Choice; Career Education; Career Exploration; *Career Guidance; *Economically Disadvantaged; *Educational Needs; Education Work Relationship; *Low Income Groups; *Occupational Aspiration; Program Improvement; Secondary Education; *Student Characteristics

ABSTRACT

This paper furnishes some general information on various characteristics of low income groups, presents a lengthy discussion of their vocational expectations and characteristics, and points out a number of ways to assist economically disadvantaged groups to improve their educational and vocational aspirations and their employment outlook. The paper reviews low income, social and cultural disadvantagement, and economic depression as factors often considered as descriptive of poverty. Some characteristics of low income groups include lower IQs in children, more restricted language usage and language patterns different from the middle class, attitudinal characteristics such as separation from the institutions and values of society and unstable families, and lower academic aspirations. Because they have not been exposed to alternatives, the vocational aspirations of low income children are limited to lower-paying positions. They regard school as a means of earning money in the near future, not in the long term. Low-income groups can be helped to expand their occupational horizons by career development services that provide career exploration and education, more effective transition from school to work, and placement and followup services. (KC)

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VOCATIONAL EXPECTANCIES OF LOW INCOME GROUPS:

GENERAL TRENDS AND SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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To the

International Vocational Education and Training Association

(IVETA)

1986 Conference

held in cooperation with

American Vocational Association

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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VOCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF LOW INCOME GROUPS:

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I. INTRODUCTION

A considerable number of sociological and educational studies carried out in the United States and other countries during the last thirty years have confirmed certain group characteristics for individuals coming from low income families. Many of these studies assert that with the exception of some unique characteristics developed under the locally existing living conditions, the general social, economic, educational and cultural characteristics of such individuals, ranging from certain personal features to those in the domains of cognition, language, attitudes, academic and vocational aspirations and achievement in institutions of learning and at work show unbelievably close, almost universal similarities all over the world.

The existence of various socially and economically disadvantaged groups in societies and the observed shortcomings in the upbringing and education of the children and youth from low income families have moved the sociologists and educators toward better diagnosing the background deficiencies and devising compensatory solutions for the needs of these individuals differing from those of the so-called middle classes. The United States has no doubt been the leading country in the planing and implementation of such social, economic, educational and cultural programs which were started with lots of momentum in the early 60's and accomplished a number of set objectives in the country as well as achieving a superb motivating effect on a number of countries, those in Europe in special, toward similar endeavors.

While the extensive compensatory education activities first undertaken during the Johnson administration with the aim of making up for some non-existing pre-school experiences in disadvantaged children have not been able to solve all existing deficiencies, they have at least eased the serious competition such children face from those of more privileged social settings, when they enter school. The same efforts have also been beneficial in extending the educational and vocational horizons of a large number of children and youth and in contributing to their overall development.

The aim of this paper is (a) to furnish some general information on various characteristics of low income groups, (b) to present a more lenghty discussion on their vocational expectations and characteristics, and, finally, (c) to point out to a number of ways of assistance to the economically disadvantaged groups to improve their educational and vocational aspirations and their employment outlook.

II. A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF POVERTY AND LOW INCOME GROUPS

The sociologists and educators who have done detailed research on low income populations in the past have developed numerous and diverse terms for them, attempting to convey adequately the various deficiencies they detected in these groups. Although some of these terms may not be too relevant to our main theme in this paper, it may be interesting and help one to see the general picture if we shortly mention all of the known terms referring to certain economically, socially, educationally and culturally different groups who, in one way or another, have ties with poverty.

A. Poverty Defined

When referring to low income groups perhaps one should take, as a starting point, the well-known word of "poverty"and spend some time on defining just what this word means in our day or how certain authors and institutions portray it in some qualitative and quantitative terms.

Levitan (1976) defines 'poverty' as "a lack of goods and services needed for an 'adequate' standard of living" and describes it as follows:

> "Poverty is a relative concept. It is primarily for this reason that in the richest country in the world (U.S.A.) one person in nine can be designated as poor. In less affluent countries, poverty is equated with living at the brink of subsistence. In this country (U.S.A.), even the lowest-income families are rarely confronted with the specter of starvation, though many are the victims of an inadequate diet."

Frost and Hawkes (1966) stress the universality of poverty and state that, although it exists in every geographical area of the United States, the concentration of the poor are in "the slums of cities, certain rural areas, migrant labor camps, and Indian reservations." Kenlston (1977) illustrates the world of the poor as "one where there are lots of social dangers, where even small children are ashamed of the way they live and, adults, as a result of poverty and desperation, have developed characteristics of being 'untrustworthy and unpredictable'."

Havighurst and Levine (1975) express their concern about the power of poverty as follows:

> "It seems probable that poverty places people in situations where they are compelled to behave in certain ways and to adopt certain attitudes that mark them as different from the mainstream of the society. If this is true, then it may be accurate to speak of a culture of poverty which consists of ways of behaving and believing that tend to be shared by poor people in a modern industrial society, and that are passed from parent to child."

Some authors such as Riessman, and Valentine and Valentine, on the other hand, while talking about certain deficiencies they witnessed in poor and deprived families, also make it a point to list a number of characteristics these groups display as "positive features, qualities or strengths."

Riessman, in more than one of his publications (1962, 1964 and others) has attempted to emphasize "the positive dimensions of the culture and style of educationally deprived people (lower socio-economic groups) and provided a somewhat long account of positive features. In summary,

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these are: "cooperativeness and mutual aid that mark the extended family; the avoidance of the strain accompanying competitiveness and individualism; the equalitarianism, in informality and humor; the freedom, from self-blame and parental overprotection; the enjoyment of music, games, sports, and cards; the ability to express anger; the freedom from being word-bound; an externaly oriented rather than an introspective outlook; a spatial rather temporal perspective; an expressive orientation in contrast to an instrumental one; content-centered not a form-centered mental style; a problem-centered rather than an abstract-centered approach; the use of physical and visual style in learning."

Valentine and Valentine (1969), narrating the findings of their research on poverty circles report that while "apathetic resignation does exist," "social disorganization can be found," and "individual pathology is certainly present" in such circles, some positive strengths such as the ability to deal with misfortune through humor, capacity to respond to defeat, resourcefulness in manipulating existing structures for individual or group benefit, capacity to mobilize initiatives for large-scale change, are also to be observed among the representatives of poverty.

Despite such positive evaluations by certain authors, the seemingly vast number of difficulties experienced by great majority of low income groups in educational undertakings and in employment circles continue to alarm the interested scholars. Lynch (1985) reports that in American society the proportion of children considered poor has risen from 2 percent to 20 percent in the 70's and is now around 22 percent of whom 39 percent are under tha age of 18. There are certain indications that this figure may grow in the coming years.

Pinn (1979) states that if the disadvantaged and some other low income individuals are not helped in the United States by various agencies to develop their educational and employment potentials in the coming years, their unemployment rate by 1990 will be 13 times more than the one for the general population.

The Carl D.Perkins Vocational Education Act (Public Law 98-524) identifies certain areas in the U.S. as economically depressed and the term applies to territories where "a chronically low level of economy or a deteriorating economic base has caused such adverse effects as -

1. A rate of unemployment which has exceeded by 50 percent or more the average rate of unemployment in the state, or in the nation, for each of the three years preceding the year for which such designation is made, or

2. A large concentration of low-income families, the designation of which is approved by the secretary as consistent with the purposes of the act, with these criteria and with such other criteria as the secretary may describe." (Sarkees and Scott, 1985)

A lot of the so-called economically disadvantaged persons live in these areas and have an annual income at or below the official poverty rate. This fact and certain eligibilities to benefit from a number of financial and public assistance programs identify the populations these persons belong to as "low income groups." The Federal Goverment, using the Consumer Price Index defined the "poverty income" in 1984 as follows:

Number of Family Members	Income
1	$ 5,400
2	6,983
3	8,277
4	10,609
5	12,566
6	14, 207 (11)

Perhaps this much should be sufficient for poverty. Let us now take a look at some of the terms developed in the past to refer to low income groups.

B. Various Terms Developed to Depict the Deprived and Disadvantaged Populations

The social scientists studying the characteristics of the economically disadvantaged groups have come up with a multitude of terms. If one studies the evolution of such terms he or she will sense, with the passing of time,the increasing sensitivity and care these scholars have shown, in their attempts of development, with the intent of being more accurate and perhaps less hurtful. There exist in the related literature numerous incidents, either defending the appropriateness or arguing against the inaccuracy and the deragotary effects, of certain terminology.

Gordon and Wilkerson (1966) state that the term socially disadvantaged covers a group of populations differing from each other in certain ways, but low economic status seems to be a common characteristic in all of these groups. The same authors indicate that such terms as culturally deprived, socioeconomically deprived, socially and culturally disadvantaged, chronically poor, the poverty-stricken, and the culturally alienated all have connotations of depressed economic status as well as low social status.

Frost and Hawkes (1970) assert that the "cultural deprivation" movement started at the 1955 annual meeting of the American Psychological Association lost its impact by the late 60's, following arguments that no group can really exists apart from a culture. The term culturally disadvantaged became popular for a while and then was put aside for being "technically inaccurate" and "descriptively derogatory."

While arguing the appropriateness of a number of terms employing the word "culture," social scientists discovered the term culture of the poor which seemed to embrace fittingly the mode of living of some large masses, and gave these masses a unique individuality. Later on, the term disadvantaged became the favorite of many scholars, because it way able to address the numberless shortcomings of low income groups well and was less injurious.

Some of the other terms employed when discussing the various characteristics of certain populations are culturally different, socioeconomically different, culturally handicapped, and educationally deprived. As we have stated above, although each of these terms may be more appropriate to be used for a certain group of individuals, there is no doubt, that, within a given society, they all are hinting some degree of economical impoverishment as well.

Presently, the term disadvantaged is being utilized with limited scope yet in more expressive fashion. Disadvantaged learner, academically disadvantaged, and economically disadvantaged are some of such terms.

C. General Characteristics of Low Income Groups

As I have stated previously, the somewhat vast literature on low income groups have disclosed a number of common characteristics for them that may be witnessed, no matter where they may be located. In order to draw a less complicated picture of the poor, I will attempt to present these characteristics by grouping them in certain meaningful ways.

1. Cognitive Characteristics:

Guilford (1959) defines "the primary cognitive abilities" as those having to "with the possession of information and its rediscovery and recognition." The same author then goes on to say that " the units of thought" are composed of "figures, symbols and meanings." I will not be able to go into any detail of the various categories of cognition such as auditory, visual and symbolic and that of verbal comprehension: instead, feeling that such a short introduction should be sufficient for our purpose in this paper, will summarize the characteristics of low income persons.

Jensen (1980) indicates the average IQ of children coming from lowest socio-economic circles to be near 85. This is the upper level of the cognitive ability of retarded children. Havighurst (1964) states that the socially (and certainly economically) disadvantaged child do not receive much assistance from his/her family in the following:

"A family conversation which: answers his questions and encourages him to ask questions; extends his vocabulary with words and with adjectives and adverbs; gives him a right and a need to stand up for and to explain his point of view on the world.

A family environment which: sets an example of reading; provides a variety of toys and play materials with colors, sizes and objects that challenge his ingenuity with his hands and his mind.

Two parent who: read a good deal; read to him; show him that they believe in the value of education; reward him for good school achievement."

As a result of such family environment the disadvantaged child, in most circumstances, is not able to develop his intellectual capacities fully. Deutsch (1983) has found that children of low social and economic environments have "inferior auditory discrimination, inferior visual discrimination, inferior judgment concerning time, number, and other basic concepts" and such deficiencies are the result of "inferior habits of hearing and seeing and thinking."

Metfessel (1964) describes the culturally disadvantaged children (coming mostly from low income families) as follows:

" 1. Culturally disadvantaged children tend to learn more readily by inductive than by deductive approaches.

2. Culturally disadvantaged children generally are unaccustomed to 'insight building' by external use of lectures and discussions at home.

3. Culturally disadvantaged children are frequently symbolically deprived; for example, imaginary playmates are much less acceptable to the parents of culturally disadvantaged children when compared to their middle-class counterparts.

4. Culturally disadvantaged children need to see concrete application of what is learned to immediate sensory and topical satisfaction.

5. Culturally disadvantaged children tend to have a poor attention span and consequently experience difficulty in following the orders of a teacher."

The observations of these and other scholars indicate that the cognitive characteristics of children of low income families are at least, affected adversely, by an inadequate exposure to the educational and cultural stimuli necessary for intellectual development and thus develop in certain unique ways that are somewhat different than those noted in the individuals brought up in well-to-do families.

2. Language Characteristics:

Extensive studies carried out by Bernstein (1961) and many others on the language characteristics of low income groups disclosed certain differences than those found among middle-class individuals. It seemed

that children coming from poor families, mostly as a result of being exposed to a limited type of language in their home environment, developed a somewhat restricted form of language and this characteristic caused them difficulty when they started school.

Restricted form of language is explained by Bernstein as follows:

"1. Short, grammatically simple, often unfinished sentences with a poor syntactical form stressing the active voice.

2. Simple and repetitive use of conjunctions (so, then, because).

3. Little use of subordinate clauses to breakdown the initial categories of the dominant subject.

4. Inability to hold a formal subject through a speech sequence; thus a dislocated informational content is facilitated.

5. Rigid and limited use of adjectives and adverbs.

6. Constraint on the self-reference pronoun; frequent use of personal pronoun.

7. Frequent use of statements where the reason and conclusion are confounded to produce a categoric statement.

8. A large number of statements/phrases which signal a requirement for the previous speech sequence to be reinforced: "Wouldn't it? You see? You know?", etc. This process is termed "sympathetic circularity."

9. Individual selection from a group of idiomatic phrases or sequences will frequently occur.

10. The individual qualification is implicit in the sentence organization; it is a language of implicit meaning."

Beckey (1942) and Irwin (1948) observed and narrated the existence of certain retardations in the speech patterns of low socio-economic groups. Black (1970) asserts that the vocabulary of low income family children at grade two is around one-third of middle class children and at grade six it goes up to about one-half. Children of the poor make more use of words that are not representative of the school culture, have difficulty in understanding that "objects have names and the same objects may have different names," suffer from some severe limitations in self-expression, employ smaller proportion of mature sentence structures, and, perhaps as a result of all these, "learn less from what they hear than do middle-class children."

Deutsch (1963) found that the existing language differences between low and middle income children increase with age and lower class children fall further behing middle-class children in language in later years.

Ausubel (1964) states that inadequate language development, often noted in children of poverty, causes difficulties in progressing from concrete modes of thought to the abstract ones. According to this author, poor family children, in most instances, reveal an inferior picture "in abstract thinking and placing pictures and objects in appropriate categories."

The middle-class children, on the other hand, use accurate grammatical order and syntax, employ prepositions more frequently, show logical modifications and stress through a complex sentence construction, select discriminately from a range of adjectives and adverbs, form better relationships within and between sentences, make good use of expressive symbolism, relate their experiences more effectively through complex language usage.

2. Attitudinal Characteristics:

Hess and Shipman (1965) describe the low income groups as "status-oriented" and indicate that parents in such groups expect an unconditional obedience from their children. The middle income families display a "person-oriented" attitude, and place importance on the feelings and aspirations of their children, and choose the way of spending as much time as necessary in explaining matters of interest to them, with the aim of developing them into responsible young men as early as possible.

Riessman (1962) has stated that individuals coming from low income populations often do not consider themselves as part of the communities they live in, feel alienated and become depressed as a result of not being sure of their own capabilities. This author asserts that such individuals usually develop some very stern beliefs in regard to morals, punishment, customs, nutrition, traditional education, the role of women in society, intelligent person, religion, politics, etc. Because of these strict characteristics, the low income people are not able to develop an individualistic philosophy, moderate and balanced attitudes toward others.

Ornstein (1969) indicates that male students coming from poor families have difficulty in adapting themselves to the school environment where many of the teachers and administrators are women, just like the providers in their homes are, and, in an attempt to prove their manhood, they form gangs and start some antisocial activities. Hawkes (1970) describes some typical attitudes of the poor as follows:

> "Basically the culture of the disadvantaged is one of hopelessness and despair. A wall is built by the individual and his family to protect him from what he believes to be an unresponsive society. He learns that schools do not speak his language. His interest in achievement is dulled because his older siblings and his parents have found that schools do not equip him for the fight he faces to

get his basic needs met... He learns jobs are not forthcoming and attempts to get help are frustrated by the cross-purposes of society's helping agencies and institutions. This pattern of despair is reinforced with experience and passed in a kind of social heredity fashion from generation to generation."

In a somewhat broad study carried out on "disadvantaged" and "advantaged" ninth graders in Ankara, Turkey, in 1972, Turker (1977) found the disadvantaged group to express lower self-concept evaluations for themselves. While only 8.97 percent of disadvantaged students considered themselves "very smart," the percentages of middle advantaged and highly advantaged students who thought the same were 19.19, and 24.80, respectively.

Same research disclosed a number of statistically significant diferences in the family relations of disadvantaged and advantaged groups. The number of disadvantaged students evaluating their family relations as "bad" was more than double when compared with the number of highly advantaged family children, responding similarly. The percentage of disadvantaged students marking the statement "my destiny, to a great extent, will be determined by a number of uncontrollable forces outside myself" was found to be twice as high than the percentage of high advantaged group that accepted the same statement.

Lewis (1965), as a result of extensive research done on poor people at various locations, has come up with a number of characteristics which he claims exist in low income groups.

This well-known researcher calls these characteristics "a special culture" and lists them as follows:

"1. Separation from both the institutions and values of the larger society.

2. A distinct absence of organization or pattern interaction at the community level.

3. Typically unstable families, with a high proportion of female-headed units.

4. Feelings of marginality, helplessness, dependency and despair."

Perhaps this much should be sufficient to draw a general picture of the poor, keeping in mind, of course, that there may be numerous exceptions to the negative outlook in such populations I have just summarized.

4. Educational Aspiration Characteristics:

Before commenting on the attitudes of low income individuals toward education and schools, and their educational aspirations, one should

refer to what has been presented so far; and say a few words on how a mode of living that is, in a number of ways, different than that of mid-income groups, influences their many values.

The educational values often reflect the aspirations of middle-class groups. To most low income groups some of these aspirations may seem difficult to achieve, unnecessary and, at times, strange. In a way, the instructional materials developed to be used by educational institutions will aim at bringing low income groups closer to mid-income populations, in values as well as aspirations. As these materials will require gentile behavior and systematic studies, they will create certain resistances in the economically poor because of their differing characteristics and values; research shows that such individuals may go as far as regarding school and education, and everything associated with the two, "unmanly" and even "feminine."

The past research attempts directed to evaluating the attitudes of poor income groups toward education were able to observe some highly interesting views and inclinations in these groups, as we have just described. A number of studies have come up with conclusions that such groups have little interest and motivation toward higher levels of learning, certainly much less aspirations for higher education than the middle income populations. Rosen (1956) indicates that motives and values that lead to higher levels of achievement are taught more to middle-class children.

Gordon and Wilkerson (1966) state that designating a socially (and economically) disadvantaged person as one lacking motivation, readiness and a learning-oriented value system will not be an adequate description of such an individual. Rather, in order to more satisfactorily determine what a disadvantaged person really is, a number of serious investigations should be carried out on the person himself, the environment (school, family, and community), and the teaching-learning process. The authors believe that some additional research should be done on the environments and the processes to be able to reach an adequately reliable definition for the disadvantaged.

Hess and Shipman (1965) have come to the conclusion that mothers in low-income populations can not manage properly to explain things to their children, give them clear instructions or motivate them toward learning. An important element affecting adversely the educational aspirations of the economically disadvantaged is the comparatively low educational level the parents usually have.

In Turker's (1977) research on disadvantaged ninth graders, the parents ranged from being illiterate to graduates of elementary school (total education five years). There seemed to be a few parents among this group who thought that elementary or middle school education (total of five or eight years) would be sufficient for their children, who were already attending the ninth grade, to be considered "learned persons." Such an expectation sets a good example about the levels of educational aspirations of disadvantaged families.

Schweinhart and Weikart (1980) assert that children from poor backgrounds are "systematically trained to fail" and, therefore, quite a large number of them become unsuccessful in school, and leave school ending up either with unemployment or marginal employment. These authors do not deny the participation of many poor persons in the mainstream culture; nevertheless, they state that in spite of certain strengths unique to them the economically poor persons "have been unable... to harness their energies to the conventional pathways to success - schooling and workplace."

A large number of researchers tie the lack of establishment of high-level and productive relations with educational and vocational institutions on the part of poor populations to the practically non-existent development possibilities in their environment during childhood, more than to their capacity for improvement.

5. School Performance Characteristics:

Numerous studies were carried out especially during the last thirty years to discover the relationship between social class and performance at school. Strom (1966) concludes that wherever the culture of poverty exists, there are also conditions to foster school dropout. In many such families the father is absent and this means "no organized meal, no organized opportunity for organized language exchange, no real interaction." The same author goes on to say that although children of poor families are ready for certain responsibilities in the classroom, the teachers usually deny them these responsibilities because of their poor grades. The low social image teachers have of low-income parents also hinders the learning possibilities of their children at school.

Deutsch (1967) directs attention to a number of factors to be considered in regard to the contact the school establishes with children as a social institution, and explains that "there is variation in the impact of this contact from group to group, fostered through (1) the child's preparation by his parents for entry into school, (2) the general meaning of the school to the economic substance of the community, and (3) the various expectations of the school and the appropriateness of its curriculum for the child. The author then makes the following observation:

> "Generally speaking, the middle-class child is more likely to have the importance of school imprinted in his consciousness from the earliest possible age...The lower-class child, because of poorer preparation, is at a real disadvantage in this exercise (learning at school), although it is the middle-class child who probably has more personal anxiety about the success of his climb (on the mountain of education)...For the lower-class child, there is not the same continuity, and he does not have the same coping mechanisms for internalizing success or psychologically surviving failure in formal learning."

Sexton (1961), in her study on disadvantaged pupils attending 242 elementary schools in Detroit, tells us that the two lowest income groups seemed to achieve below grade levels and the differences in their achievement increased as grade levels became higher.

Turker (1977) in his research comparing the school performances of disadvantaged and advantaged ninth graders found that the latter group had surpassed the other in almost every course offered, excepting physical education. The disadvantaged group also seemed to be inferior to the advantaged groups in its performance on Otis-Beta Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test and the Differential Aptitude Test components.

Sewell and associates (1972), while working on some large groups of students in Wisconsin, observed that schools were not aware of the differences existing among various social classes and the differing effects these classes exerted on their children. These authors conclude that the parental encouragement and friends' plan depend heavily on the son's socioeconomic origin, while teachers' encouragement is more heavily dependent on the student's academic ability and performance."

Bloom (1981) reports a cooperative study on the learning, teaching and curriculum of the schools carried out in twenty-two nations simultaneously during the past two decades which revealed a number of interesting findings. This study compared the countries in regard to the achievement, motivation and attitudes of students of each country. Many differences were found in curriculum, teacher competence, classroom usage, etc. between these countries, as well as within each country. But perhaps the most significant outcome of this study was the conclusion that "differences among teachers and differences among schools were relatively small in comparison with the differences in the homes of the students. Extensive national studies completed in seven nations more recently also indicate that "the one variable that explains much of the variation in the learning of the students is their home environment."

III. VOCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK OF LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS

Educators have always been concerned with the vocational aspirations of the students they teach. Following the Second World War there has been a growing interest in educational institutions of industrialized countries to set up certain units in these institutions to help graduating students locate suitable jobs. These units have later become counseling centers where students receive educational, vocational and individual counseling and guidance assistance. Quite a number of these centers are well equipped to assess and further develop the somewhat limited vocational horizons of economically disadvantaged student groups.

A. Factors Influencing Occupational Aspirations and Selection of Work:

While discussing the vocational needs of special groups, Wall (1976) cautions the reader that these groups resent being stigmatized, stereotyped and mislabeled. Therefore "extreme care should be exercised in describing them and in preparing instructional materials for their use." There has been voluminous studies, more in the United States than anywhere else, that cast valuable light to the identity and vocational expectations of and work preferences of low income groups.

A longitudinal study executed in six southern states by Kenkel (1980) tried to assess the life plans of poor youth, by looking into their status aspirations, career goals, educational and occupational aspirations. A group of 311 rural female fifth and sixth graders and their mothers were questioned in 1969, and again in 1975. Such factors as father's education; prestige of mother's occupation; punishing or demanding mother; occupational counseling of daughter by mother; and, self-concept, all seemed to influence the life plans and career goals of this population at "the marriage age."

The study conducted by Goff in the United States (1967) on the occupational expectations of 13-14 year olds, revealed that while 46 percent of advantaged students aspired to be medical doctors and lawyers, 40 percent of disadvantaged students wanted to become players at some of the leading sports teams in the country. Turker's research (1977) on occupational preferences of advantaged and disadvantaged high school students showed that the disadvantaged students preferred the more dependent occupations such as teaching at primary, middle and high schools and working for government, whereas advantaged students put check marks next to a number of independent and highly professional vocational expectation wishing to be college professors, lawyers, architects, engineers or physicians.

Ginzberg and associates (1951) have come to the conclusion in their studies that boys coming from low-income groups show different vocational choices than those of boys from high-income despite the fact that they go through similar stages of vocational development. They disclose that while high-income family boys decide at early ages to attend college and to prefer professional occupations, boys from low income families seem to be satisfied with jobs "paying little more money than that of their fathers, skilled work and those that would not expose them to accidents."

Ginzberg explains the low levels of vocational aspirations of the economically disadvantaged groups as follows:

> "Their environment obscures the appropriate translations of interests and capacities irto realizable occupational choices...Boys with mechanical interests and ability are not able

to think beyond becoming mechanics or electricians...They believe that there is little that they can do (about vocational planning) beyond selecting a high school where they can pursue on appropriate vocational course."

Thus the social class one belongs to may influence his vocational expectations either negatively or positively. Another powerful factor in vocation selection is home. There exists a number of studies that suggest parents' occupations to be a significant determining factor in the development of the child vocationally.

Lipsett (1975) states that "the demonstrated affection and the social skills of the parents contribute much to the affective capacities and skills of the child, which in turn determine the type of society and the type of job in which he will be comfortable. "This writer lists the following points as those social factors influencing vocational development and career planning of individuals and needing to look into by a guidance counselor:

"1. Social class membership. The facts that identify the counselee's social class, including occupation and income of parents, education of parents, place and type of residence, and ethnic background.

2. Home influences. Goals that parents have for the counselee, place among siblings, role of counselee in the family, family values and counselee's acceptance of them.

3. School. Scholastic achievement, relationship with peers and with faculty, group goals and values in the school, vocational specialization if any.

4. Community. Group goals and values, the "thing to do" in the community, special career opportunities or influences, counselee's identification with the community and desire to stay there and accept its values.

5. Pressure Groups. Has the counselee (or his parents) been exposed to any particular influence that leads him to value one occupation over another? Is this influence compatible with the counselee's abilities, values, and needs?

6. Role Perception. Does the counselee want to be a leader, a follower, an isolate, or just a "good Joe?" Is the counselee's perception of himself and his role in accord with the way the way others perceive him?"

It is quite interesting that in a study conducted by Form and Stone (1957) low and middle-income individuals responded differently to a specific question which was: "If your daughter came home one night and told you she was in love with a young man you didn't know, what would be the first question you would ask about him?" Those who came from

poor classes stated that they would inquire whether the young men was employed and "was a good provider." The middle class individuals asked many more questions about his specific occupation, his mobility prospects on the job, his religion and the reputation of his family. The persons representing the upper social levels investigated the level of education, religion, financial position of the stranger and asked many more questions about his family.

This example illustrates the social class differences rather well. What can be the reasons behind inadequately developed occupational aspirations of disadvantaged individuals when compared with those of middle and upper classes and how can they be improved? Family characteristics certainly influence adversely the vocational expectations of low income individuals. Parents' schooling, inferior educational aspirations, low level occupation characteristics, insufficient income, money-centered attitudes, somewhat harsh physical punishment modes, negative manners toward school, exert a delimiting impact on the proper development of the child's vocational horizons and, at times, force him to become an early provider.

Studies conducted by Hieronymus (1951) showed the individuals coming from high socioeconomic classes to have high levels of aspiration and positive attitudes toward school; in contrast, low income groups display lower levels of aspiration and somewhat negative attitudes toward education.

Research also indicates that a large number of economically disadvantaged individuals regard education solely as a means to earn money and prefer to accept any paying low-level job or occupation that may come their way. The non-existence in their close environment of people with highly professional vocations and the absence of adequate and proper counseling and guidance services cause these persons to be satisfied with much less than their true potentials.

Residential characteristics and certain locally existing limitations too hinder ample evaluation of the individual's vocational interests, abilities and aspirations. Unexpectedly negative treatment and belittling in school at times result in the poor child's developing an alienation toward teachers and education, and joining the gangs on the street.

I believe Sarkees and Scott's list (1985) of problems that seem to trouble disadvantaged individuals, is one of the more comprehensive accounts of their future difficulties in vocational aspiration and work selection:

"1. poor foundation in basic skills (reading, math, communications skills);

2. low educational levels;

3. low aspirational levels;

4. high rate of absenteeism;

5. rebellious attitudes;

6. poor health and nutrition;

7. negative attitudes toward school, authority, and the law;

8. lack of job-seeking and job-retention skills;

9. lack of exposure to career development information and related activities;

10. lack of worker role models;

11. no provisions for home study;

12. lack of encouragement from parents regarding educational progress or goals;

13. home environment that may be effected by hunger, unpaid debts, alcoholism, drug addiction, and/or overcrowded conditions (environment detrimental to self-growth and development);

14. low self-esteem;

15. language as a barrier to communication in school (low vocabulary and concept development);

16. lack of communication between teachers and parents;

17. lack of basic needs (food, safety, belongingness);

18. poor economic conditions;

19. lack of access to transportation."

This list certainly paints a bleak picture. It should be remembered, however, that many of the above are some universally observed shortcomings that lead create certain unique educational and occupational characteristics in low-income families.

B. A General Look into the Employment Characteristics of Low Income Individuals:

Again, Sarkees and Scott (1985) describe some of the employment related characteristics of economically disadvantaged individuals and their families as follows:

"1. unemployment and/or irregular employment;

2. lack of entry-level employment skills;

3. lack of opportunities for employment training;

4. poor health and nutrition;

5. dependence on public assistance programs;

6. dependence on seasonal work;

7. lack of interest in steady employment;

8. little interest in or training for job advancement;

9. lack of educational encouragement;

10. poor personal hygiene habits;

11. tendency toward transient pattern;

12. low achievement expectancies;

13. history of broken families;

14. lack of authority figure(s) in home."

These authors then go on to give an inventory of "the most frequently occurring (occupation and work-related) problems," in connection with disadvantaged children in school:

"1. excessive absence or poor attendance;

2. hygiene problems and poor personal appearance;

3. lack of supplies, materials, and/or equipment to complete assigned projects;

4. lack of basic preparation skills in reading and math;

5. lack of a value system that is conducive to preparation for a career;

6. lack of interest and motivation for education or work;

7. lack of background information regarding student's family, health records, and school records;

8. low self-esteem and/or lack of confidence."

Havighurst (1953) has also prepared a list of problems youths face and presented them in the form of developmental tasks. Here we will repeat only those that relate to work entry:

"1. Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults;

2. Achieving assurance of economical independence;

3. Selecting and preparing for an occupation;

4. Preparing for marriage and family life;

5. Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence;

6. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior;

7. Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behavior."

As one will see from these somewhat extensive problem lists, low income individuals, while in school and at work entry, seem to have to over-come certain serious shortcomings. A number of difficulties experienced by these individuals during education will no doubt repeat themselves in employment later, and, in all probability, create more critical consequences. There is consensus among experts, therefore, that the individuals coming from low income populations will need and benefit more from the following assistance and services:

"1. Career development activities;

2. Vocational assessment;

3. Curriculum and/or instructional modification;

4. Placement in remedial class;

5. Special supplies;

6. Job-seeking and retention skills;

7. Employment skills development;

8. Career counseling;

9. Job placement assistance;

10. Transportation;

11. Financial aid;

12. Follow-up assistance (58).

VI. SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Reed (1962), in his article entitled "Certain Aspects of Vocational Guidance in a Technological Age," stresses the direct and indirect implications certain trends and developments, and the impact of new technology, have created for vocational guidance workers, in following words:

> "In this technical and scientific age, people at both ends of the ability dimension are subject to readjustment problems - the inability of the least able, and therefore least prepared to secure employment while the more able may be over-recruited. Educational planning and educational philosophy are closely involved (perhaps partially responsible) with these problems."

It is true that with speedily changing new technologies and the contributions of such advances to the nature of societies, employment needs and prospects also experience rapid evolution. Nevertheless, the components of vocational development which Super (1953) summarizes in an excellent manner seem to prevail. Perhaps it will be worthwhile to repeat them here before talking about the kinds of vocational counseling and guidance assistance low income individuals need, to be able to make full use of their potentials. This author puts forward his comprehensive vocational development theory in a series of ten propositions:

"1. People differ in their abilities, interests, and personalities.

2. They are qualified, by virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations.

3. Each of these occupations requires a characteristic pattern of abilities, interests, and personality traits, with tolerances wide enough, however, to allow both some variety of occupations for each individual and some variety of individuals in each occupation.

4. Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and hence their self concepts, change with time and experience (although self concepts are generally fairly stable from late adolescence until late maturity), making choice and adjustment a continuous process.

5. This process may be summed up in a series of life stages characterized as those of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline, and these stages may in turn be subdivided into (a) the fantasy, tentative, and realistic phases of the exploratory stage, and (b) the trial and stable phases of the establishment stage.

6. The nature of the career pattern (that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs) is determined by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, mental ability, and personality characteristics, and by the opportunities to which he is exposed.

7. Development through the life stages can be guided, partly by facilitating the process of maturation of abilities and interests and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of the self concept.

8. The process of vocational development is essentially that of developing and implementing a self concept: it is a compromise process in which the self concept is a product of the interaction of inherited attitudes, neural and endocrine make-up, opportunity to play various roles, and evaluations of the extent to which the results of role playing meet with the approval of superiors and fellows.

9. The process of compromise between individual and social factors, between self concept and reality, is one of role playing, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in real life activities such as school classes, clubs, part-time work, and entry jobs.

10. Work satisfactions and life satisfactions depend upon the extent to which the individual finds adequate outlets for his abilities, interests, personality traits, and values; they depend upon his establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which he can play the kind of role which his growth and exploratory experiences have led him to consider congenial and appropriate."

After reading Super's full treatment of the vocational development process, one keeps wondering where economically disadvantaged individuals stand in connection with the series of developments that have to take place. Surely this comprehensive list of propositions only makes us more aware of the numerous disadvant[illegible]s low income groups have to experience in their vocational development and job selection. Considering the various vocational development stages an individual has to go through we may now suggest a number of ways to improve the vocational expectations of low income groups.

A. Ways to Expand Vocational Aspiration Horizons of Low Income Groups:

In order to provide vocational counseling assistance services to individuals from low income families, a series of activities should be carried out to obtain adequate data on them. The needed data comprise the following:

"1. Anecdotal records

2. School records

3. Social worker report

4. Comments and recommendations from counselors, administrators and teachers

5. Medical and health records

6. Student conference

7. Results of diagnostic and psychological tests

8. Language assessment information (e.g., language spoken in home)

9. Information from parent/guardian

10. Employment history and goals

11. Current and past services provided

12. Current instructional grade at which learner is functioning (61)."

The counseling services that will help widen occupational perspectives of disadvantaged children in vocational education are nowadays planned and conducted in four phases:

(a) Phase 1. Career development - Career awareness (at primary level),

(b) Phase 2. Career orientation (Grades 7-8),

(c) Phase 3. Career exploration (Junior High/Middle School), and

(d) Phase 4. Career education - Career preparation (Secondary Level).

Let us look shortly at the objectives of each of these phases.

Phase 1 Career Development Services: Career Development - Career Awareness

The main objectives are:

1. To develop basic skills

2. To develop learner recognition of the personal and social significance of work

3. To help each learner to become aware of himself/herself as an individual and as a group member.

4. To develop learner awareness of many occupations and to expand career interests.

5. To improve overall learner performance by unifying and focusing basic subjects around a career development theme."

Phase 2 Career Development Services: Career Orientation

1. To provide a greater exposure to all levels of occupations.

2. To provide real life experiences through field trips to business and industry, and guest speakers.

3. To further develop basic skills."

Phase 3 Career Development Services: Career Exploration

"1. To provide opportunities to explore the world of work with simulated and hands-on experiences.

2. To provide activities involving materials, tools, processes, and personal relationships consistent with career opportunities.

3. To assist individuals in establishing more realistic career goals to pursue in the career preparation phase.

4. To provide experiences that provide exploration of work values and personal values in relationship to specific jobs."

Phase 4 Career Development Services: Career Education - Career Preparation

"1. To provide every learner with specific cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills in a selected occupational cluster or clusters in preparation for job entry and/or further education or training.

2. To continue development of the learner's social and basic skills.

3. To counsel in individual, small and large group sessions extensively.

4. To provide work adjustment and work experience in a variety of settings, such as vocational programs in school settings, work settings in business and industrial sites, work activity centers and sheltered workshops.

5. To provide transition services for learners who leave the educational program to enter a community and job situation or a program that provides further vocational training.

6. To maintain continuous follow-up of all dropouts and graduates and use the resulting information for program revision (62)."

If all these occupational assistance services are given to low income family individuals, as planned for every phase, it should not be difficult to assume that their career possibilities will expand enormously.

B. What Can Be Done for Effective Transition from School to Employment

Educators define "transition" in various ways. Perhaps the definition of Wehman (1984) should be more applicable here since it has more vocational connotations than some of the others. This author's definition is as follows:

"A carefully planned process, which may be initiated either by school personnel or adult service providers, to establish and implement a plan for either employment or additional vocational training of a handicapped student who will graduate or leave school in three to five years; such a process must involve special educators, vocational educators, parents and/or the student, and adult service systems representatives and possibly an employer."

The transition of disadvantaged students as well as others from school to work presents a large number of problems which I will not list here. I will only mention some of the effective approaches that may be taken to ease these difficulties. Sarkees and Scott (1985) summarize these as follows:

"1. Working linkages will have to be developed between parents, the school, and community agencies to ensure a continuum of nonduplicated services for special needs learners.

2. The vocational teacher is the key individual in making transition happen. Most vocational teachers have developed their curriculum in light of the employment needs of the state, region, or locality.

3. Once vocational teachers have formulated instructional objectives that prepare learners for successful participation in employment and in family and community life, attention must be given to selecting the instructional strategies, methods, and techniques that enhance transition."

Transition from school to work can be helped if the following strategies are put to use:

"1. Incorporating workbooks and instructional materials dealing with employability skills into the curriculum.

2. Designing instructional activities that help students develop and polish social skills that can be used in the family, community, and employment settings.

3. Designing projects or adopting projects that enable learners to plan their work, use academic skills to solve problems, practice work habit skills such as following directions and seeking help when needed, use technical knowledge to perform manipulative skills and to apply self-evaluation skills to their work.

4. Developing assignments that require the class to operate as a business and to design, produce, and market a product.

5. Developing and maintaining a transition and placement portfolio for each special needs learner.

6. Developing an instructional unit containing information about school and community resources that could be used to help learners prepare for and obtain employment.

7. Developing and implementing activities that encourage parent participation in the educational program.

8. Encouraging special needs learners to become actively involved in vocational youth organization activities.

9. Developing training stations in the community where special needs learners can participate in cooperative work-study experiences or in work exploration and "work tryout" experiences.

10. Making student assignments that require them to identify and tentatively make career choices through participation in computerized career information systems.

11. Requiring that student search out jobs for which they have received training by utilizing a computerized job bank program.

12. Scheduling field trips to selected employment settings (64)."

C. Necessary Placement and Follow-up Services

In industrialized countries, job placement services for graduating students have been in operation for some time. Again, the United States has been one of the leading countries to introduce effective and extensive job placement and follow-up services for disadvantaged individuals as well as for others. Almost every educational institution in the U.S. now has either a job placement office or a counseling center looking after the needs of her students.

Job placement programs not only help certain program graduates locate and obtain full-time jobs, but also provide services leading to a number of different placement options for disadvantaged students. With the help of these services disadvantaged students may be placed in work activity centers, work adjustment centers, and transition centers. They may also receive training in on-the-job training centers or sites that are actual work situations. Another option is to place them in various jobs that exist in the school system. Still another possibility is to place students in actual jobs while they continue their educational programs at school through cooperative education or work-study programs.

Follow-up services also are a significant part of assistance to be provided for disadvantaged students. Initial follow-up visits with the newly employed may make his transition to employment a more effective one. Immediate assistance to those that are rejected can help identify the existing problems and find appropriate solutions for them.

Follow-up services help validate the educational program and placement attempts. They provide assistance for both the employer and the employee. These services also provide valuable information about necessary changes in the educational programs to suit better the needs of industry and business circles. They assure continuous employment for disadvantaged individuals, if necessary, through other placements. And finally, follow-up services provide a means of continuous support during the difficult, early stages of employment (65).

V. CONCLUSION

Since 1950's there has been a great deal of concern in industrialized countries, and more so in the United States, about certain shortcomings observed in the educational and cultural characteristics of low income populations. Large number of studies were carried out since then which aimed at studying these shortcomings and suggesting some remedies for them. The vocational expectations of low income families was one of the observed deficiencies and they seemed to fall short of those encountered in middle income groups.

The educators and sociologists interested in addressing the numerous needs of economically disadvantaged individuals have developed many terms in the past to describe them adequately and properly. There has been large number of studies examining the various characteristics of such individuals in the domains of cognition, language, attitudes, educational aspirations and school performance. All of these studies had come to a consensus on the necessity of certain compensatory or remedial education programs for low income individuals and such programs were started in the United States in early 60's.

The vocational expectations of the economically disadvantaged groups seem to be influenced by a number of negative factors such as low educational levels; rebellious attitudes; negative attitudes toward school, authority, and the law; lack of worker role models; money-centered attitudes; harsh physical punishment modes in the family; parents' limited schooling and vocational outlook, etc. As a result of all these, disadvantaged individuals choose some low level occupations and do not display much hope for vocational improvement, unless they benefit from proper and adequate vocational counseling and guidance services.

This paper lists a number of approaches and practices that can help individuals from low income families expand the horizons of their vocational and occupational characteristics. Some such activities comprise obtaining sufficient data on children of such families, having them go through well-planned and well-executed career development services, assistance to be provided for effective transition from school to work and the follow-up services. The past examples of adequate vocational counseling assistance services give much hope to be successful in eliminating the shortcomings of the vocational aspirations and vocational development characteristics of disadvantaged populations, at least to some satisfactory levels.

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